MONTEREY NEWS

April 2010
VOLUME XL · Number 4

The Town

by Sue Protheroe

Informational Meeting Mar. 23

The Select Board would like to remind everyone to attend the March 23rd informational meeting at the Firehouse, at seven p.m., which will discuss the May annual town meeting warrant. One important article on the warrant will be a proposal from the Southern Berkshire Regional School District School Committee to amend and restate the regional agreement for the school district. The proposed amendments will be included in the annual town meeting warrants of all five member towns (Monterey, Sheffield, Egremont, Alford, New Marlborough).

Copies of the restated agreement are available at the Monterey Town Hall. The three main proposed amendments are as follows:

- That the school committee shall employ the statutory method of assessing each town's operating budget.
- That the school committee shall use the statutory method for assessing each town's capital budget.
- That the school committee "shall determine the location, structure, and physical plants of all schools and school facilities."

Such action shall be taken only upon

Will Marsh

The Konkapot, March 14, 2010

the affirmative vote of seven members of the ten-member school committee, and then ratifification by a majority vote at town meeting in at least four of five member towns.

The agreement will be discussed at the informational meeting after the budget items, and we encourage all residents to attend.

Library Needs More Space

Will Marsh and Mickey Jervas, Library Trustees, and Mark Makuc, Library Director, came to the March 1st Select Board meeting to inform the Board that the Library Trustees are asking the Historical Society to vacate the Knox Museum wing and find another space to display and store their artifacts and memorabilia. Library attendance in 2009 was 33 percent more than in 2008, and the library has increased the number of programs and services it offers and needs the space. At present one of the library-sponsored youth groups has to meet in the church basement because of lack of space at the library. The Historical Society is a private organization that contributed part of the construction cost of the wing in the 1970s (the majority of the construction money came from town funds and a matching grant obtained by the library) and has been using the space under an agreement with the Trustees calling for the room to be open to the public weekly at regular hours. The Historical Society has been inactive for some time now, the museum has not been open (a mold problem has developed in the room and on the artifacts), the room is used only for storage, and the library needs more space; the Trustees feel that taking over the museum wing seems the best, least expensive, and most reasonable solution for the town. The Trustees are requesting the Historical Society to remove their material from the room by June 1.

The Select Board asked if the Trustees could help the Historical Society find a new place to store their material and mentioned the Bidwell House as a possible alternate storage space. The Board also feels that the old town records the Historical Society has been holding properly belong in the Town Hall. The Select Board is willing to discuss the situation with the Historical Society if asked.

Monterey Community Center

Charles Ferris and Dennis Downing came to the March 1st Select Board meeting to discuss a proposed dog park at the community center on the former Wilson-McLaughlin property. The Board agreed that the proposal needs to go through the town and pointed out that the driveway and parking would have to be worked out, as well as funding. Plans for the community center haven't been approved yet, and funds have not been raised yet for it. The Board noted that mowing the property would also be an additional expense not covered in any department's budget now.

On March 8, Joe Baker and Ruth Green of the Friends of Wilson-McLaughlin House (FWMH) met with the Select Board to discuss the driveway and other plans for the community center. A revised plan was presented that has the driveway coming off Route 23 instead of off New Marlboro Road, which saves a couple hundred feet and will cost considerably less than the original estimate. The property currently has parking for about 3 to 4 cars, and the new plan would accommodate 20-25 cars. Building Commissioner Don Torrico said that the proposed parking area would be regulated by the Massachusetts Architectural Board, required for any parking areas with more than 15 spots. Select Board member Jon Sylbert pointed out that another potential use has arisen for the Wilson-McLaughlin House (Historical Society) and was concerned that the use approved several years ago may not fit the town's current needs.

Given all of the situations, uses, and proposals that have recently arisen concerning the community center, the Select Board wants to take a more comprehensive approach instead of doing things

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If a tree falls on Main Road . . . does a semi get stuck on New Marlborough Road? So it would appear. Main Road was closed in the center of town for a few hours so a tree damaged in March 13th snowstorm could be taken down, forcing the semi to try a detour. (Left photo by Maynard Forbes; right photo by John Sellew)

piecemeal and spending a large amount of money on a driveway that might not fit the new potential uses. Sylbert noted that the FWMH should present their new master plan for the property for the Board to review. Joe Baker pointed out there will also be an issue with the water supply and quantity controls, and the FWMH are in conversations with the Monterey Water Company. The account is now a household account, not a municipal account, and the municipal water needs might not be met without drying up the water supply.

The Board feels that current planning (community garden and dog park) has become much more than just throwing up a couple of fences. The FWMH thought that the money for the driveway and parking was going to come out of the highway budget, but it has to be a special article since the Highway Department does not have funds in their budget for this unanticipated work. The Select Board also doesn't want to ask the town for a large amount of money for the driveway/parking area without a definitive project for the property. Sylbert doesn't feel that a finished driveway should be put in for the construction phase; a temporary solution should be done to suit construction needs.

It was noted that the special permit already granted was only for a community center and community garden; no other municipal use was approved. Charles Ferris felt that a dog park fell under a "community use," but Torrico stated that a special permit would have to be opened again because a "dog park" use was not asked for and abutters should have the right to voice their concerns regarding the additional noise and other factors that could affect them. Torrico said plans need to be submitted to him so he can review them and the land use laws to give a more definitive opinion. The Board agreed that an "exclusive" space should not be assigned to the Historical Society and that what would be best would be display cases throughout the WMH displaying the historical artifacts.

Ferris said that he didn't feel the proposed enclosed area for dogs would fall under the bylaw that prohibits dogs in parks in Monterey, which he said wasn't a bylaw anyway, just a regulation adopted by the Park Commission; a copy of the bylaw in question, which was approved at the May 2008 town meeting, was given to him.

Jon Sylbert asked if a legal opinion was required to determine whether or

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not the town was obligated to install the driveway prior to an approved use of the building. He also questioned if a community garden or dog park could be approved prior to a driveway being installed and if handicap access issues would come into play for the community garden and dog park. Both a community garden and dog park would need an accessible path for handicap individuals, but Torrico repeated that before giving a definitive opinion he would need to review the plans.

Select Board member Wayne Burkhart felt some few good uses had been presented and a driveway should be installed even though we are in a tough economic time; he felt that the overall cost for the fencing and driveway was small. Select Board Chair Scott Jenssen agreed. Sylbert agreed that the town supported a community center back in 2005; however the FWMH have been unable to raise money to build the center and he wonders if the town would support the same proposal now considering the town's changing needs.

Joe Baker and company agreed to meet with Don Torrico and come back to the Select Board with more definitive plans.

Dennis Downing attended the March 15th meeting to ask that a special article be put on the town meeting warrant asking for $10,500 for the proposed dog park at the community center. The Select Board approved putting this article on the warrant and also putting on a separate special article requesting $25,000 for a driveway/parking area. After much discussion, it was decided to consult Town Counsel regarding the implications of who would ultimately be responsible for the care and maintenance of the dog park.

The Select Board is pleased to see there is so much interest in using the Wilson McLaughlin property and wants to support these efforts.

Police Blotter

Chief of Police Gareth Backhaus reported that there were extensive problems during the March 13th storm. Trees were down, and there were several motor vehicle accidents. Two poles that were down on Sandisfield Road required assistance from Northeast Utilities, and traffic on Route 23 was diverted up Fairview Road for part of the storm.

Jeff Mason from A1 Security came to a Select Board meeting to question the town's policy on false 911 calls. According to Chief Backhaus, the first false alarm is free, and any consecutive false alarms are billed to the homeowner in increasing amounts. This policy was initiated so that people would have their alarms serviced at least once a year and would not be using town resources to have the police answering a false alarm due to faulty equipment. After Chief Backhaus left, the town's bylaws were reviewed, and there was a question whether the cumulative fines meant for one calendar year.

Other items in the police report included a loose dog on Sandisfield Road (not found): a report of gunshots, which turned out to be target practice; traffic direction during a brush fire; several faulty 911 calls (one a child playing with phone); a false fire alarm on Eaton Road; assistance for a tractor-trailer truck stuck on New Marlborough Road; response to a situation involving a mentally ill person; a lockout in front of post office; and weather-related accidents on Pixley Road, Sandisfield Road, and Mt Hunger Road A huge number of trees and wires were down all over after the March 13th storm: Tyringham Road, Main Road, Sandisfield Road, Cronk Road, Bidwell Road, Harmon Road, Mt Hunger Road, and Brook Lane. The tree on Sandisfield Rd took two poles down which required a tree crew (National Grid subcontractor) to be called in.

Winter Storm

Larry Klein came in to discuss a situation that had developed in the March 13th snowstorm. He and his wife had gone to the Mahaiwe earlier that evening, and

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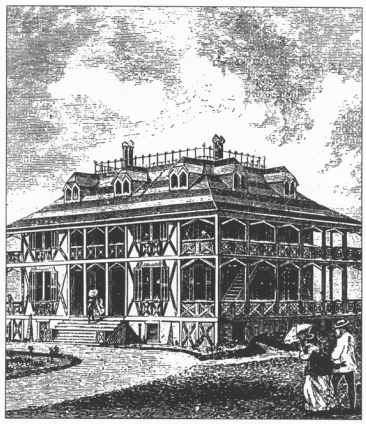
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upon returning he had extreme difficulty getting to his house on Fairview Road. (He had exchanged cars with a friend to facilitate the friend's getting home and was driving the friend's car.) Director of Operations Maynard Forbes, who was at the Select Board meeting, said that it was impossible to plow dirt roads under those specific storm conditions, because of the nature of the plows. Scott Jenssen concurred and said that the weight of the truck was not important; it was the angle of the plow that caused the problem, and that the policy was not to plow dirt roads if the roadwas has thawed underneath the snow. Maynard further added that the town, while always trying its best, is under no obligation to keep all roads totally clear 100 percent of the time.

Mr. Klein said he is concerned about safety issues if people cannot get home safely during a snowstorm. The Board agreed that this is a problem, both because we live in a rural area, and we have a lack of cell phone service

Barbara Gauthier came to the March 15th Select Board meeting to request that a snow and ice emergency be declared, because our budget went over $150,000 during the last fiscal year. At a later meeting on March 29, when the town warrant was finalized, the amount spent for salt and sand for 2009–2010 was determined to be $39,035.

Census Jobs

A census representative will be administering tests for U.S. census jobs at Town Hall on the following April dates:

- Saturday, April 3, 10:15 a.m.–noon
- Thursday, April 8, 10 a.m.–noon
- Thursday, April 15, 10 a.m.–noon
- Thursday, April 22nd, 10 a.m.–noon

Kutsher's Sports Camp

The sports camp has submitted an application to the Planning Board to operate as a year-round camp. The capacity of the parking lot was discussed; the KSA representative said that the present capacity of 300 students should be adequate. A question was raised about noise being generated by events such as weddings. The board decided that noise was not in their purview, and if the road is stable and safe for winter weather, and if there is adequate parking, the special permit should be okay. Representatives of KSA will be invited to the March meeting of the Planning Board.

Meetings and Events

The Annual Town Meeting will be held on Saturday, May 1, starting at 9:30 a.m. at the Firehouse, preceded by a special meeting at 9:15.

A meeting to discuss the Broadband Initiative will be held on Saturday, April 24, at 10 a.m., also at the Firehouse.

An Easter Egg Hunt will take place on Sunday, April 4, at 2 p.m. on the library lawn, sponsored by the Coffee Club.

Town Hall will be closed on Monday, April 19, for Patriots' Day.

The Monterey Park Commission needs volunteers to break down the ice rink at the Firehouse pavilion on Saturday, April 3, at 9:30 a.m. If you have a cordless drill, please bring it. There will be coffee and doughnuts!

The Cultural Council is planning a program for Friday of Memorial Day weekend, May 28. There will be puppeteers, folk singers, and strawberry shortcake. The celebration will be held in the Meetinghouse.

The summer music series at the General Store will begin the following evening, Saturday, May 29,at the General Store.

A joint celebration of the founding of Tyringham and Monterey will be celebrated on July 3. This will be an all-day concert with local musicians.

This and That

Bettina Schwartz was approved for a two year-term on the Agricultural commission.

The MSPCA has grant money to help solve beaver-related flooding problems in the Berkshires.

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Census Message from Rep. Pignatelli

We have been informed by the local census headquarters that South County is in need of recruits to do clerical work and to knock on doors, as well as enumerators. They have asked for our help to make sure South Berkshire County is well represented.

If you know of anyone who would like to work for the census, please have them call the Census Bureau Pittsfield Office, 413-553-3220, or visit us at www.2010censusjobs.gov. Census job tests are given at Monterey Town Hall every Thursday at 9:30 a.m.

The applicant needs basic fundamental knowledge, i.e.; basic math, alphabetizing, etc. Clerical staff makes $11.00 per hour, and enumerators and people who actually knock on doors get $14.00–$16.00 plus mileage.

As we are all well aware, the stakes are high! An accurate count of the local population helps to ensure that your community receives its fair share of federal funding. This funding includes resources for services, such as health care, education, and roads, so please, let's join together to help with the census efforts in South County.

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Message from the Tax Collector

The fiscal year 2010 Real Estate and Personal Property bills for the fourth quarter have been mailed and are due May 3, 2010. If you do not receive yours, please contact the tax collector's office (413-528-1443 x117). Please direct all questions regarding personal property tax, assessments, and abatement applications to the Board of Assessors, PO Box 488, Monterey, MA 01245 (413-528-1443 x115).

To accommodate taxpayers who want the convenience of paying Monterey Real Estate and Personal Property taxes online, an online payment option is now available. To pay your tax, you must have your current bill and checkbook/credit card in hand. Log on to www.montereyma.gov and click on Pay Real Estate Taxes Online. You will need to enter your current bill number and the current bill year (2010). MasterCard and Discover credit cards will be accepted. Please note the credit card company will charge the taxpayer a fee for the service. This fee is not assessed by or paid to the Town of Monterey.

The tax collector's office will be closed on Saturday, April 10, and Saturday, May 1.

— Mari Enoch, Tax Collector

Local Broadband Initiative Website, Meeting

The Western Mass Community Broadband Network now has a name and website: WiredWest: Connecting Western Mass to the World; www.wired-west.net. We also have a Facebook page. On the website you will find detailed information on the organization, the project, FAQs, how you can help, and resources.

A meeting to discuss the Broadband Initiative will be held on Saturday, April 24, at 10 a.m., at the Monterey Firehouse. All are encouraged to attend.

— Monica Webb

Help Needed to Break Down Ice Rink

Volunteers are needed to break down the ice skating rink in the firehouse pavilion on Saturday, April 3, beginning at 9:30 a.m. Many hands make light work. Cordless drills are helpful but not necessary. Please come help out for an hour or so. Coffee and doughnuts will be provided by the Park Commission. Smiles provided by all.

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Summer Youth Cultural Enrichment Grants

Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation has announced an April 16th deadline for applications to the Simple Gifts Fund. The fund awards grants to young people ages 8–21 for participation in cultural or creative summer programs, such as theater internships, music or art camps, or language immersion programs. Residents of Berkshire, Columbia, northeast Dutchess, and northwestern Litchfield counties may apply. The application form and guidelines are available online at www.berkshiretaconic.org/grantseekers or by calling 413-528-8039.

The Simple Gifts Fund was established in honor of Bill Crofut by his family. Bill was a beloved local folk singer who died in 1999. He had a deep understanding and empathy for the dreams and aspirations of young people. He wanted to do something that could help them achieve their goals and knew that even small amounts of money could help to purchase an instrument, study dance, or participate in a summer program.

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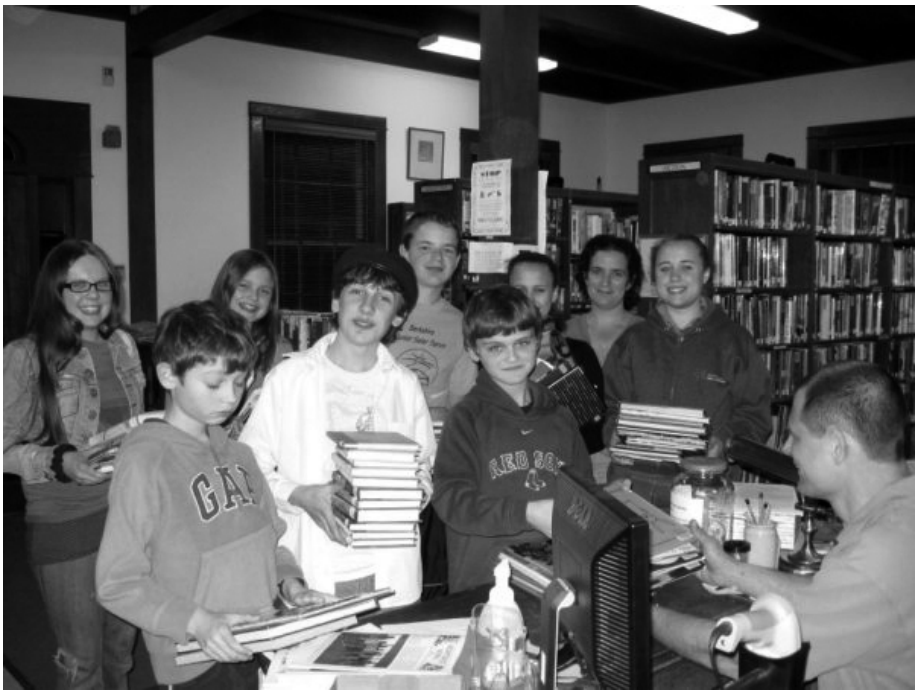

Library Friends and the youth book group present Library Director Mark Makuc with stacks of new books purchased partly by the Friends and partly with grant money: (l–r) Maura, Joe, Gabi, Sam, Jonah, Justin, Ana, Franny, Morwenna, Mark.

Friends Help Library Get Grant for Children's Books

The Friends of the Monterey Library have helped the library quite a bit as we come to the first anniversary of their existence. From the money they raised in membership contributions they were able to put $350 toward a matching grant from the Libri Foundation of 2 for 1—meaning a total of $1,050, and the Libri Foundation was able to get an extra $350 of math and science books from Hal Berenson and Laura Ackerman. The grant totaled 78 children's books, from picture books to nonfiction and fiction for older children as well—and the total value ended up being $1,419.01! Thank you! We're hoping the kids will come in and see the new books on the table by the fireplace—some have already gone out, and we hope they will all find some child's eye! This Books For Children program was a winner for all.

Come by and browse through the new books!

— Mark Makuc, Library Director

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May 1st Town Election Slate

There are no contested seats in this year's town election on May 1 (and no candidate has stepped forward for one position), but, hey, these folks need your support anyway. All candidates are endorsed by both Democratic and Republican caucuses.

Zoning Board of Appeals (5 yr):
Cynthia Weber (inc)
Board of Health (3 yr):
Robert Annelli (inc)
Board of Assessors (3 yr):
Stanley Ross (inc)
Constable (3 yr):
Raymond Tryon (inc)
Cemetery Commission (3 yr):
Mary Makuc
Finance Committee (3 yr):
Stanley Ross
Library Trustee (2 seats for 3 yr):
Carolee "Mickey" Jervas (inc)
William Marsh (inc)
LIbrary Trustee (1 yr):
Kenneth Basler
Moderator (1 yr):
Mark Makuc (inc)
Park Commission (3 yr):
Bettina Schwartz
Park Commission (3 yr):
Jessica Sarno
Park Commission (2 yr):
no candidate
Planning Board (5 yr):
Stephen Enoch (inc)
Planning Board (2 yr):
Barry Karson
Select Board (3 yr):
Scott Jenssen (inc)
Tax Collector (3 yr):
Anne Marie Enoch (inc)
Treasurer (3 yr):
Patricia Mielke (inc)
Tree Warden (1 yr):
Shaylan Burkhart (inc)

April 21st Potluck Features Community Garden

The crowd that attended the March 17th community potluck dinner was treated to a spectacular evening of exquisite musicianship by violinist Hannah Cohen and Gabriella Makuc, two members of the Berkshire Music School's Forget Me Nots. The program was an eclectic mix of duets and solos from Mozart, Chopin, Liszt, and others, ending with fiddle tunes and a sing-along for St. Patrick's Day. We feel honored to have had them perform for us.

For the April 21st potluck, we have a program about the Monterey Community Garden. The garden is a project of the Monterey Community Center committee, whose members are Joe Baker, Cynthia Weber, Gige O'Connell, Gerry Shapiro, Laurie Shaw, Mary Makuc, Evelyn Vallianos, Ruth Green, Shirley Olds, and Shaylan Burkhart. Ruth Green says, "We have been working all winter to start a community garden on the Wilson-McLaughlin House property and are just about to get things growing. About half of the plots are taken, and there is still space for more gardeners. For that reason we want to talk to town residents about the benefits of community gardening and how we see our garden contributing to life in Monterey in years to come." They will give a short presentation about the garden and community gardening in general and then answer questions from the group.

The next Monterey community potluck dinner will be held in the Fellowship Hall of the Monterey Meetinghouse on April 21 at 6 p.m. Please bring a dish to share and a place setting and silverware for yourself. Everyone is welcome.

— Barbara Dahlman & Kyle Pierce

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Cal Ripken Baseball Signups

South Berkshire County Cal Ripken Baseball signups for players ages 5 to 12 have begun. Players from Otis, Monterey, Great Barrington, Sandisfield, Blandford, and neighboring communities are welcome. The cost is $35 for one player and $50 for families. The season began with indoor batting clinics on Sundays in March inside the Otis Farmington River School. Outdoor practices will start in April at Greene Park on Route 23 in Monterey. The league has three divisions, a 5-to-7-year-olds rookies league, an 8-10-year-olds AAA team, and an 11-12-year-olds major league team. For more information email sgraves8@yahoo.com or call 413-269-4632.

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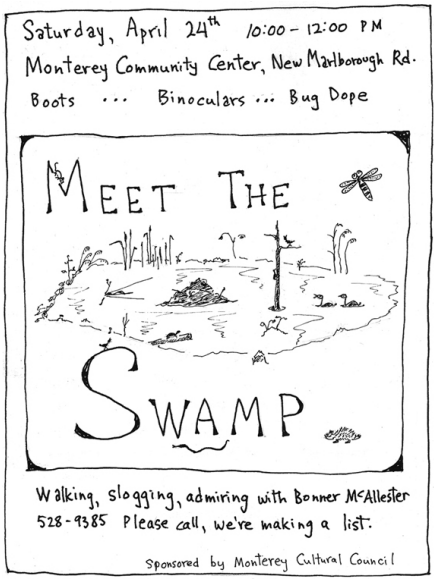
Bidwell House Offers Summer Internships

Are you fascinated by the circumstances of the earliest settlers of the Berkshires? Are you a high school or college student? Do you like to tell stories, to research, to write? Then consider becoming a Museum Studies Intern this summer at the Bidwell House Museum in Monterey.

The Bidwell House Museum is a New England heritage landmark that uses the history of its land, house, and collections to reimagine, re-create, restore, and research colonial and early American life in Western Massachusetts.

High school and college students with an interest in American history and museum studies are invited to apply for summer internship opportunities at the Bidwell House Museum this summer. High school interns spend two weeks at the museum: in week one the intern learns about the Bidwell family and colonial Berkshire history, the house, the property and the collection, and how docents give tours; in week two each intern chooses a history topic to research and begins to give tours of the museum as a junior docent. Our junior docents are visitors' favorites! The museum is also seeking a college intern for an eight-week internship.

Recent summer interns have come from the following towns and school districts: Agawam High School, Dana Hall School, Hunter College High School, Lenox Memorial Middle and High School, Monterey, Monument Mountain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Thanks in part to generous grants from the Monterey Cultural Council and the Tyringham Cultural Council as well as private sponsors and friends of the museum, each high school intern receives a $200 stipend for the two-week internship.

The internship application can be found on the museum's website, bidwellhousemuseum.org. Deadline for applications is April 30, and applicants will be invited for an interview. Please call or email Barbara Palmer, Executive Director of the museum with any questions: bidwellhouse@gmail.com, 413-528-6888. Come join us at the Bidwell House Museum this summer, where "It's a country mile to the eighteenthth century"!

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Monterey Cultural Council Has Big Plans

Grants have been awarded and now the Cultural Council is getting ready to bring exciting cultural events to Monterey.

Funny, intelligent. and knowledgeable, Bonner McAllester will be conducting a nature hike (<) on April 24.

With a music program assembled by Joe Baker, followed by elegant strawberry shortcakes, the Strawberry Festival on Saturday, May 29, at the Meetinghouse will kick off the summer season. Bring your friends, family, and Memorial Day weekend house guests.

Local musicians performing at the Township # 1 Day, a pastel workshop, a wild mushroom event, and more, are in the planning stages.

Stay tuned. Lake Woebegone, eat your heart out.

Call for Artists!

The Otis Cultural Council seeks artists and craftspeople for the Third Annual Otis Arts Festival, Saturday, July 24, at Farmington River Elementary School, Otis. Entry fee is $15. Applications are available online at www.townofotisma.com/culturalcouncil, or at the Otis Town Hall.

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How Green is Timber Framing?

With the current popularity of both timber framing, and being "green," this has become a relevant question. Let's define what "green" and "timber framing" are. In order to be green, a dwelling must: 1) be well above average in terms of energy efficiency, 2) consume a minimum of natural resource in its construction and upkeep, and 3) provide a healthy and nontoxic environment for its occupants. We'll define timber framing as the design and construction of a frame, made of wood, which is structural and stable without sheathing, and which is held together with aesthetically pleasing joinery, primarily variations on a mortise and tenon.

To start with, let's list what is inherently "un-green" about timber framing. Timber frames often tend to use large amounts of wood, and the wood is typically from large trees—thus consuming more than its fair share of natural resource. Well, that's it. I can't think of anything else un-green about timber framing, but the quantity of large trees consumed is a very important consideration. There are strategies to minimize this aspect, and some other strategies to offset it.

Frames that spread the load of the building evenly over a foundation, either with a large number of piers or a wall or slab foundation, are a good start. Keeping spans short and using plenty of posts can keep timbers smaller in diameter as well as length, conserving larger trees. Where posts can't be used, trusses built of smaller pieces of wood can carry longer spans. Careful planning and location of knee braces and points where many pieces of frame come together can minimize wood use and timber size. A common "skin" for timber frame is SIPs (structural insulated panels). SIPs are amazing things. They consist of two layers of sheathing separated by between 3½ inches and 8 inches of foam insulation. All three pieces are glued together at high pressure and are amazingly strong, flat, and insulative. A properly designed SIPs building will easily outperform just about any "stick frame and fiberglass structure" by as much as 200–300 percent in terms of energy efficiency.

Using structural insulated panels minimizes the load that the frame is carrying, because they carry part of the load of the house. The panels are most often attached to the outside of the frame, leaving the frame exposed. The sheathing in the SIPs use a relatively small amount of wood that is waste from other industrial operations, and the modern foam in SIP's (urethane, EPS, or XPS) is relatively inert once it's installed.

Back to wood consumption: because a timber frame is such a "woody" look, I tend to dramatically minimize the amount of naturally finished wood in a timber frame house. I'll use plaster, or painted MDF (medium density fiberboard) on ceilings and walls). For floors I'll use alternate materials: concrete, cork, painted lower quality wood, tile, etc. For cabinets and furniture, I'll use painted sustainable materials to contrast with the frame. I don't use asphalt shingles because they don't tend to last long on a house, and they last a long time in a landfill. My two favorite roofing materials are steel, and recycled

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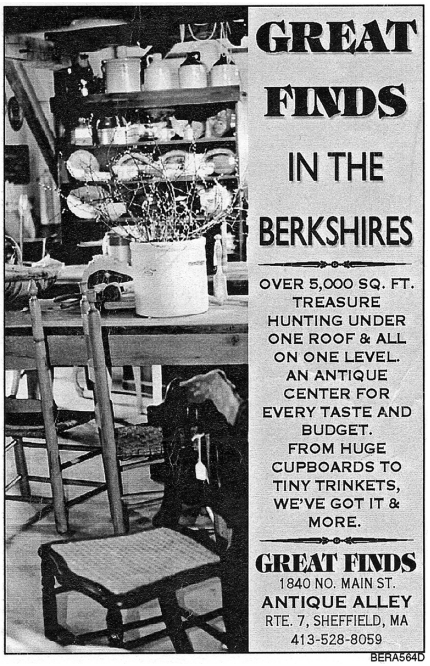
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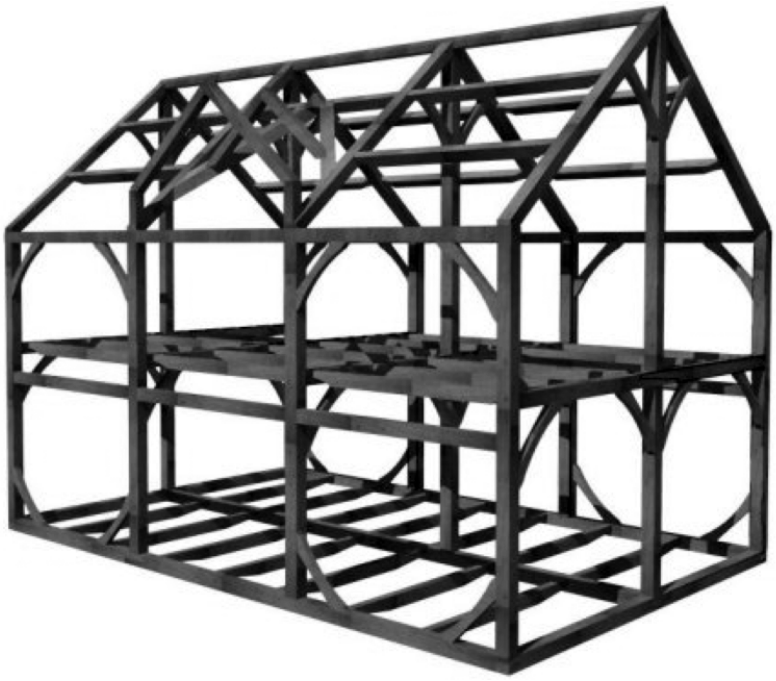

rubber shingles that look like slate. They both last 50+ years if installed correctly.

I design almost all of the houses that I build to be both passively and actively solar in heating, cooling, electricity, and domestic hot water. I often use rainwater collection systems, grey water reclamation, composting toilets, and passive geothermal heating and cooling.

One aspect of timber framing that often gets overlooked in the green debate is that a good timber frame takes a substantially higher degree of skill and planning to execute than most other building systems. Because builders need a higher than average level of commitment to their skills, it naturally follows that they will have a higher level of attention and commitment to their trade in general — producing products that are higher in quality and thus greener than they would be with a lower commitment level. Last on the list for sustainability, wood for timber framing is typically sawn locally (little trucking), and worked green (no oil-fired kiln drying).

Above is a frame built primarily of 6 x 6 hemlock, locally grown and sustainably harvested, in which no span is over 9½ feet. I am currently constructing this frame to be installed in Sandisfield in the spring. Feel free to stop by and take a closer look or check out the website at www.webnash.com.

— Michael Erkkinen

Food, Inc.

Free Film Sunday, April 25

This month's free film will be *Food, Inc*., a 2008 documentary by Robert Kenner. Michael Pollan (*The Ominvore's Dilemma*) and Eric Schlosser (*Fast Food Nation*) will walk us through the supermarket on a journey that is almost guaranteed to change the way we eat. We'll also meet Joel Salatin of Polyface Farm in Virginia, a welcome voice and way of farming and growing food the way it should and can be done. We'll get the picture right away that corn, corn sugar, and corn politics are among the bad guys in our national food story. Thirty percent of the land base in the US is planted in corn in a system in which the farmers are paid to overproduce a grain that should never be fed to cows, pigs, and poultry or even to people in its refined high fructose form.

A review in *Variety* says this film "does for the supermarket what *Jaws* did for the beach."

Come on down to the Meetinghouse basement at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 25, and get warned off. And many thanks to Barbara Tryon for suggesting this film.

Information: Bonner McAllester 528-9385.

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Wildlife Report: Birds, Bears, Mink, and More

I'll tell you the most dramatic thing first. A friend in Sandisfield sent me photos from someone just down the pike from here in Sharon, Connecticut, showing a large handsome mountain lion on the deck of their house earlier this month. Incontrovertible, unless someone is mighty good with Photoshop, as well as unscrupulous.

Also in the feline department, we have Keith O'Brian and Chip Allen out on Blue Hill Road, who saw a bobcat (also called a wildcat) by their house on March 7. Maybe we should rename the road, in honor of all these cat sightings.

On the same wild road we had a call from Kate Ryan about a bear on her doorstep in the wee hours of March 19. A barking dog and a woman banging on the storm door made little impression on the bear. We don't know what she said, but when she began yelling at the bear as well, it went off and took down her sturdy birdfeeder (set in concrete).

Kate has also seen a snowshoe hare, so big she at first mistook it for her dog (March 11). And still on Monterey's wild road, Ted Warner reports two mink loping along behind his place by Three Cubs Brook. I should add that we had a mink in our henhouse yesterday, which took refuge in the nestbox. It either ate some eggs or frightened the hens into stomping on a couple of eggs. Hard to tell (March 22).

On March 19, Sue Protheroe reported about 1/3 open water on Lake Buel and plenty of mergansers, both common and hooded, and ducks, including one big Muscovy duck that was harassed by a pair of bald eagles until it left the lake and took up residence on a neighbor's lawn. Sue has also seen pied billed grebes, geese, and burgeoning pussywillows.

In the first week of the month, Peter Murkett heard a saw whet owl up on Dry Hill. And from our far-flung migratory Richard Nault we learned of wood ducks returning to his nesting box on the Rainbow River in Dunellon, Florida. Richard will migrate to Monterey for the summer, but the ducks will probably stay. (I just looked up the Rainbow River, and I feel flattered that Richard would leave it for Monterey—it is clear and wild, with springs roiling through its sandy bottom for miles, a phenomenon.)

Red-winged blackbirds are reported from all over, also robins. Kate Ryan had a woodcock "peenting" behind her place, saw her first bat, and heard the first spring peeper all on March 19, in case you were wondering when spring came to Blue Hill Road.

Both Kate Ryan and Steve Snyder have seen foxes early in the month, Kate near Butternut on Route 23 and Steve on Curtis Road. Steve's fox was more golden than red. George and Jan Emmons have plenty of chipmunks up from their winter sleep, and George saw a ruffed grouse on River Rd., very tame or unafraid.

Just off Mt. Hunger Rd. in east Monterey, Ruth Green has heard barred owls calling and gargling like they do in mating season, also coyotes. Kate Ryan has seen more than fifty robins at once eating barberries (they are thorny but they aren't all bad!) and heard mating calls from chickadees, juncos, and white-throated sparrows. She has seen a red-bellied woodpecker and grackles at her feeder (before the bear took it down) and a killdeer, golden-crowned kinglet, and Carolina wren on Curtis Road. A male cardinal has been singing at her place, also bluebirds.

And this just in: On March 29 Glynis Marsh saw a moose on River Road, just below the bridge. After they observed each other for a bit, the moose loped off up the Champignys' driveway. How, Glynis wondered, can such large animals ("horses on stilts") not be seen more?

Final take: As the editor was formatting this report, two deer strolled across his yard just outside his window. They made the cut.

Thank you for your calls and emails, dear human community neighbors. Keep them coming.

— Bonner McAllester
(413-528-9385, bmca@berkshire.net)

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Library Services Threatened by State Budget Cuts

Do you want our libraries to continue to serve you as they have? The budget currently being worked on which will start on July 1 will eliminate some of the services currently offered and will drastically reduce others if it is not amended. The biggest blow will be the loss of the Western Massachusetts Regional Library System, which has provided services to our small rural libraries for almost fifty years. The services include delivery of interlibrary loan and CWMARS holds; education for the directors; cooperative purchasing power; help with technology such as broadband and wifi; supplemental library collections such as audio books on CD; and many other behind-the-scenes aids which have kept our libraries current in policies and practices. This cut has already resulted in the loss of our bookmobile. The current plan is to combine all six regions into one entity that will be charged with dealing with the Boston Public Library as well as the Monterey Library.

Governor Deval Patrick initiated the process when he asked for a 17 percent cut in the state library budget. The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (appointees of the governor) responded by concentrating the cuts in the Regional Library budget. The 17 percent total cut has turned into an unsustainable regional 29 percent cut. The governor's budget is on the table, and the legislature is now working on a response. The time is now to contact these people. Go to http://www.friends.wmrls.org and follow the links or come to the Monterey Library for contact information.

teaquinox in Placitas

cleaning: *tea house dusted swept mopped*
and mopped again
utensils bowls washed
bodies stretched and washed
minds washed and emptied

preparing: *tea sifted placed like oku-pin**
like turtle mountain in tea caddie
words gathered and sifted
like March snow on apricot limbs
bud swollen waiting
mind sifted and emptied

entering: *happily bowing solemn sorrowful*
respecting suffering silence being
rejecting violence chatter needing
minds full of emptiness

sitting: *comfortable together alone*
minds lounging and empty

tea: *offering receiving bowing*
sipping noticing appreciating all
full and empty and mindful

— Boney Oscar

**oku-pin — Tewa for Turtle Mountain, i.e., Sandia Mountain in New Mexico*

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Best Thermal Rider: The Turkey Vulture

The turkey vultures are back from their warm wintering places, and they came a little early this year. I saw my first one early in March while visiting my cousin Jean in Central Massachusetts. We clambered up Mt. Pisgah right after breakfast, across the road from her house in Berlin. At the time, Monterey was under nearly two feet of snow, but from the Connecticut River eastward that day, the ground was completely bare.

At the top of the ridge that is Pisgah there are a couple of good lookouts. We stopped at a bare rocky spot, and I gazed off across miles of woods, hills, roads, buildings. My mind was soaring when Jean said, "What's that, a hawk?"

I squinted for some speck in the sky, but it turned out she was looking in the top of a bare tree in our immediate foreground, about thirty feet off. What a sight! A huge brown bird with her back to us, wings outstretched, swaying slightly in a pivot as well as rocking right to left. This was a turkey vulture, catching the sun on her dark back and wings, warming up while waiting for the thermals to assemble themselves.

To say this creature was brown does not tell the tale at all. The feathers are a rich warm color of many shades, including elements of gold. I don't know if I was ever close enough to the back or topside of a turkey vulture to notice these things before. Mostly we see them from beneath, and with binoculars we can see the underwings are striking silver and black, the tail grey.

The Pisgah bird rocked in the sun for some time before springing into the air. We wondered if we'd startled her off that warm-up place prematurely, if her body might still be chilly and the air currents not right yet. We should not have worried. She swooped up and up, circled, and vanished into sheer altitude. Then we spotted her again, this time with a companion. Time passed and we were thrilled to see our bird return, perching to face us. Now we could see her famous red head. After some scrutiny, the huge creature decided we were no threat and turned her back, spreading those great wings again to catch more heat.

Turkey vultures, when chased or threatened will often pass out. They may also regurgitate their food, which could make a pursuer pass out.

These birds are now known to have common ancestors with the storks and ibises. They are not birds of prey and do not kill live animals. Their lifestyle has allowed them to evolve without much body mass, with small muscles and lightweight bones. Though an adult turkey vulture has a six-foot wingspan and a 25-32-inch body, it only weights six pounds. That's SIX feet, SIX pounds. Think about this. Also, her aerodynamic design is perfect for soaring, and she has been known to stay airborne for (yes) SIX hours without flapping her wings. She will find a thermal updraft and ride it upward, circling, until she comes to the top. From here she dives across the sky, as fast as—60(!) miles per hour, until she finds another thermal and then begins her climb again. This is a true fact of science, not one of those untrue ones.

So many myths, untrue facts, and negative associations are heaped upon the turkey vulture that I don't know where to begin in my debunking. Maybe it is best just to say they are gentle, monogamous, harmless animals that live by eating carrion and a little vegetation. They search for dead meat using their eyes and their sense of smell, attracted by mercaptor, a gas produced in the early stages of decay.

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The naked head, considered by some to be so ugly, is practical. Just ask any of the people you know who have shaved their heads. She has to stick hers into the decaying animals she eats. If it were feathered and "pretty," she'd be carrying around a load of bacteria, dangerous to her health. Instead, her head just becomes damp and she dries it in the sun, killing off any germs in the process. Her legs may become wet with decaying carrion, but these she sanitizes with her own excretions. This process also cools her. No comment for the shave-headed guys we know, just you know, it works for the turkey vulture.

The turkey vulture is not built for killing or combat. Her beak is short and light, her feet like those of a chicken as opposed to those of a hawk or an eagle. She cannot clutch and carry prey, but she can run and hop on the ground quite well. In fact, she has to take a little run on the ground before jumping up to fly, and those few flaps of the great wings are about what she can manage with her reduced musculature. Sometimes a turkey vulture has to fly in a hurry to avoid a predator. She may regurgitate whatever is in her crop in order to lighten her weight. This gives her better odds for quick flight and often stops the predator for a few precious minutes as it gobbles down the turkey vulture's recent meal.

There is much more to tell, and much to learn from the turkey vulture. If your appetite has been whetted (or maybe not), you can check out The Turkey Vulture Society, Inc. They have facts, they have tee shirts, they are a non-profit.

Really, there is no need to go to Google to love the turkey vulture. Just look up very high and think, "Six feet, six pounds, six hours."

— Bonner J. McAllester

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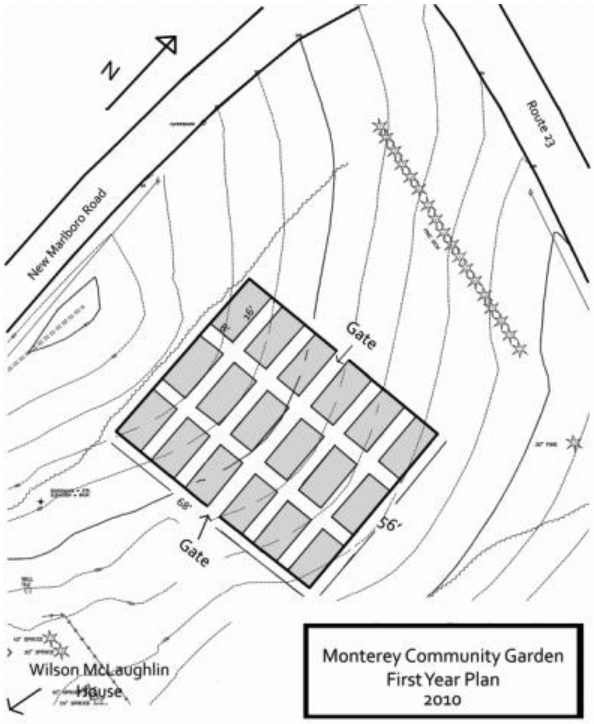
Community Garden— Here We Go

Drive by the southeast corner of Main and New Marlborough Roads these days and you can see the Monterey Community Garden site through the trees. Pretty soon now we will begin working on the garden fence and laying out the plots for the gardeners. How exciting can you get! We already have more than half the plots spoken for.



One of these garden plots could be yours!

The Community Garden has set aside several plots for specific purposes. On one plot we will grow vegetables for the local food pantry. Anyone who wants to help with this plot is more than welcome—just send an email to center@ccmonterey.org. In collaboration with the Council on Aging, we have two plots specifically for seniors in our community. Our kindergarteners will be learning how to plant seeds and watch them grow in their own plot, and we have a handicapped-accessible plot in the works for this summer.

We have had some success with our fundraising efforts—High Mowing Organic Seeds of Wolcott, Vermont, gave us a grant of one hundred packets of vegetable and flower seeds. We received donations from Ed Hume Seeds and WinterSown Educational Foundation as well, and we have received a Seeds of Encouragement stipend from Community Gardens as Appleseeds.

Save this date! We invite you to our first annual Plant Sale on May 29, at the garden, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. More details will follow in May's *Monterey News*. We are thrilled to have assistance from Gould Farm in making this sale happen. Stephen Enoch and his gardening team are growing vegetable, herb, and flower seedlings for us. You can't get any more local than that—so come and see the garden and get your tomato plants from us on May 29.

Garden plots are still available. Please visit www.ccmonterey.org for more information if you would like to join.

— Ruth Green

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Talking To The Osprey

Just as spring is in the air and the transformation of "ice out" has liberated the shorelines of Lake Garfield and Lake Buell, the migratory return of the osprey will be a lofty and uplifting harbinger of the new nesting season that will soon be upon us.

Sometimes called a fish hawk, the osprey can sight its prey while hovering up to a hundred feet overhead, then diving down to plunge feet first into the water (after first closing its nostrils) with reversible talons to grasp a slippery fish. Then, with a six-foot wingspan and ultra light bone structure, it becomes airborne, even when soaking wet with its prey weighing several pounds. It then positions its catch head first to improve aerodynamics of portage to the nest to feed the fledglings.

This spectacle first came to me as a boy while walking the banks of the Potowomut River in Warwick, Rhode Island. When the shad bushes came into bloom along the water's edge, the tidal waters would soon come alive with the annual April spawning runs of anadramous species such as herring and shad. While I witnessed what appeared to me as a magical orchestration of Mother Nature, my wildlife mentor was an Indian who was hired to work on our dairy farm so he could be close to his Narragansett ancestors on what had been their hunting ground.

When my father left home to serve overseas with the Air Force in World War

II, I thought I might never see him again, and my friend, whose name was Elwood Young, said he would in true Indian tradition adopt me in case that happened. We ceremoniously built a fire on a high bank across the river, which he said had been an ancient campground. After we had caught a fish, cooked it in the sand under the live embers, and ate it, he took his knife and cut both our arms, then tied the cuts together for about twenty minutes with twine he had brought. As the long war years dragged on, he made good on his promise and taught me that Indians communicate with nature more than most of us ever know. He even taught me to whistle like the "cheep-cheep" call of the osprey, and I became so adept that it seemed as if we were talking together

I can no longer walk along the river that had become the ancestral heritage of both of us, because it is now private property with large houses. Last April I stood on the bridge just below the dam where the herring used to gather waiting for a high tide to carry them over. Now there is a fish ladder that doesn't seem to help. My spirits soared when an osprey suddenly appeared overhead. I called out to it, but it did not answer and instead flew downriver where I could not follow. Then I remembered, "You cannot go home again." I also knew how Native Americans felt when sacred places of Mother Earth were taken away from them for one reason or another. However, where wildlife survives, a spirit of their environmental perception remains.

— George B. Emmons

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Farewell to Monterey

Several years ago I contracted a case of "lake fever." It came after seeing the movie *On Golden Pond*, and the only cure was to acquire a property like the one in the movie. It didn't take long to focus on the Berkshires, just an hour from our home in Longmeadow, but then I was in for a surprise: there was very little for sale. "Folks hold on to these places forever," I was told, and in fact it took two or three years of fruitless searching before I heard a grapevine rumor about a spot on Lake Garfield that hadn't yet been listed. I called the sellers who lived in the greater New York area and somehow convinced them to drive up and meet me the very next day, a snowy Wednesday in February 2000.

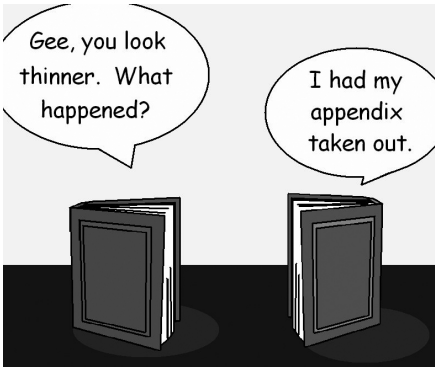
The house was small, a ramshackle three-season cottage wrapped in white vinyl. It looked cute from a distance, but on closer inspection it was apparent the two-foot blanket of mid-winter snow was hiding a multitude of sins. And the inside was worse: bone-chilling cold, dark, crooked floors, bowed walls, dowdy furnishings covered by sheets. But on the back wall of the living room was a sliding glass door offering a spectacular view of the lake. I stepped outside, trudged through the snow to the edge of the water, and was hooked.

Always a shrewd bargainer, I immediately begged the owners to please let me buy it at their inflated asking price, and also paid them a few thousand extra for their old furniture and tableware.

My wife thought I was crazy, and after inspecting the property a few days later, our closest friends asked us if it was possible to back out of the deal. But every time I looked at the lake I was reassured. This was what I had longed for, and in time they came to agree with what captivated me: the view of the lake; the serenity of the water; the charming town of Monterey; the historic General Store; the access to everything the Berkshires had to offer. It was a magical place, a Brigadoon that transformed everyone the moment they entered.

After a few years we made the decision to knock down the collapsing cottage and build a new place that would be our retirement home for nine or ten months each year, with part of the winter spent in Florida. Then a funny thing happened. The math got turned around. We were spending most of our time in Florida, and the big, expensive place up here was sitting unoccupied and steadily draining our bank account. After a lot of calculating and soul searching, it became clear that the prudent decision was to sell.

So now we are, regretfully, leaving Monterey, at least in terms of property ownership. But to paraphrase an old adage, you can take the boy out of Monterey but you can't take Monterey out of the boy. One never knows what the future will bring, but it is my intention to maintain a connection to the area, to continue submitting articles to the *Monterey News*, and to return for visits during the summer season.



To all of you I've come to know over the past ten years, especially the extraordinary group at the Church basement Coffee Club, thank you for your warm reception and camaraderie. I will miss you, and think of you fondly for many, many years to come.

— David Shifrin

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Green Thumb
The Big Three

Last month we got into the compost pile. We looked at how beneficial compost can be to any garden soil and several ways to make compost on our own property. This month we're going to talk about the other nutrients needed in the soil to grow strong healthy plants.

The macronutrients, nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, are required in comparatively large quantities for healthy plant production. Nitrogen leads the list because it is required to produce amino acids, genetic material, chlorophyll, and proteins. In organic gardens we use alfalfa meal, feather meal and blood meal, green manures (more on this later), and fish emulsion as sources of nitrogen. Sources like leather meal and sewage sludge are prohibited. You want to avoid any source whose inputs cannot be determined, or any synthetically derived source, in your organic garden. Chilean nitrate is a popular commercial product, but it is prohibited because of high salt content, and it has a similar effect on soil as synthetic nitrogen. Leather meal should not be used because of the chemicals used in the tanning process, and sewage sludge contains God-knows-what inputs and just should not be trusted.

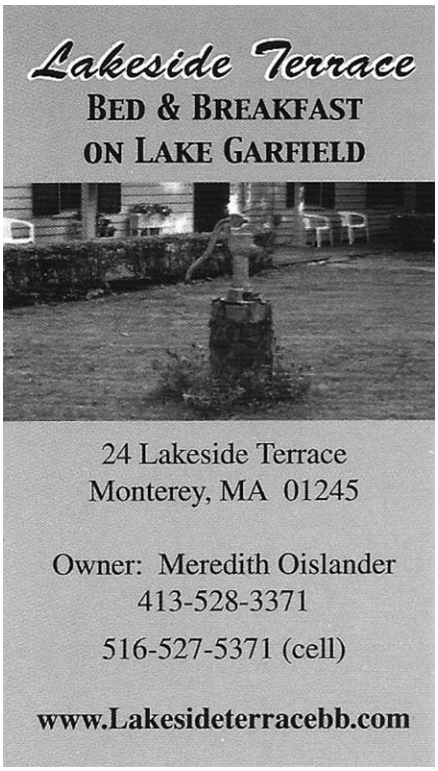
Phosphorus helps with plant energy production, but it can easily be overapplied and result in phosphorus runoff. You have probably seen examples of algae blooms caused by excess phosphorus. As with all amendments, only use the amounts recommended by your soil test. Good sources of phosphorus include alfalfa meal, bone meal, rock dusts, and greensand.

Potassium is needed by plants for overall plant health and disease resistance. Potassium can be obtained from alfalfa meal, seaweed, sulfate of potash, and greensand. All of these amendments can be added directly to your compost if you can wait long enough for their incorporation into the soil. Mixing amendments into compost is the best way to be sure they get mixed evenly into the soil, and you can avoid spot concentrations of amendments that way.

Calcium, sulfur, and magnesium deficiencies may show up in your soil test because of pH imbalance as well as other causes. Again, you don't want to use any synthetics, and you need to base your application rates on soil test recommendations. You can obtain calcium from calcitic or dolomitic limestone, kelp meal, or calcium sulfate. Just make sure you don't use burned or quick lime or synthetics. Sulfur and magnesium sources include Epsom salt, greensand, and sulfate of potash.

The micronutrients, or trace minerals, can be present in your soil but the soil pH may prevent them from being usable to the plants. We'll discuss pH in a minute. If you need to add trace elements, rock powders may be your best source. Fish products are okay, but caution is advisable—fish wastes may contain high levels of mercury. Either way fish fertilizers contribute to the massive overfishing that is depleting our global fish populations.

On to soil pH. The pH level of your soil is an indication of its acidity or alkalinity, and soil pH can affect the ability of plants to absorb nutrients. Most vegetables prefer a slightly acidic soil. You can use sulfur or calcium to create a more or less acid soil in accordance with your soil test recommendations. Remember that you told the testing lab what you wanted to grow, and they will tell you how to get



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your soil to the most advantageous pH for your crop.

With the exception of compost, most soil amendments are used to make quick changes in the soil's health. These amendments, while helpful, can be expensive, and their manufacture may have a significant effect on the environment. Rock mining and fishing are two good examples. There is another way if you have the patience and a bit of talent for organization. By planting cover crops and green manures in rotation with your food crops, you can replenish the soil's fertility and improve its structure over the longer term.

Nitrogen is 78 percent of our atmosphere. Legume crops can play a useful role in extracting nitrogen from the air and fixing it into the soil for use by other plants. There are some readily available legume varieties for cover crops, like winter rye, alfalfa, field peas, and clover. Remember that they have different growing times and seasons, so you will want to choose them depending on the type of food crops you grow and your available land. Mixtures of cover crop seeds are also available if you want to broaden the beneficial effects of a "green manure" planting.

A word about tilling. Overtilling degrades the soil by damaging soil structure and encouraging nutrient loss through runoff and volatilization. However, even highly compacted soil can be rescued with the addition of compost. Compost helps to aerate soil and increase water retention. If you are concerned about doing further damage to compacted soil, and you have the time, you can apply compost to the top of the soil in a raised bed. Eventually the microbes and earthworms will penetrate the compacted layer and mix things up satisfactorily. This is the way I prefer to make raised beds now. I use this procedure in the fall or early spring and let the little critters do the rest.

For most of you, and me included, there is a way to keep tilling to a minimum from the outset. By using narrow planting beds, including raised beds, you never really have to step on the planting surface. Compost and other amendments can be added on top of the soil and incorporated into the top few inches, thus preserving soil structure.

We made it! Here's a reminder—don't get too concerned about all the things that can happen to soil and just try to do your best with it. Gardening, even vegetable gardening, is meant to be enjoyable. So if you muddle through and get at least more right than wrong, you're going to be way ahead.

— Ruth Green

ॐ

Organic Gardening Workshop April 10

Dreaming about dill? Pining for parsnips? Longing for lettuce? Tempted for tomatoes? Begging for beets? Join the Northeast Organic Farming Association/ Massachusetts Chapter (NOFA/Mass) on Saturday, April 10, from 9 a.m.–noon at the Monterey Meetinghouse for an exciting workshop on how to cultivate your own organic garden. The workshop leader is Ruth Green, Monterey resident and owner of Green Arts Garden Design.

The Monterey workshop is presented by NOFA and the Monterey Community Garden. For more information about the Monterey Community Garden, please visit www.ccmonterey.org.

Registration is $30 with a $5 discount for NOFA members. For information on how to register, visit www.nofamass.org, or contact Ben Grosscup, 413-658-5374, ben.grosscup@nofamass.org.

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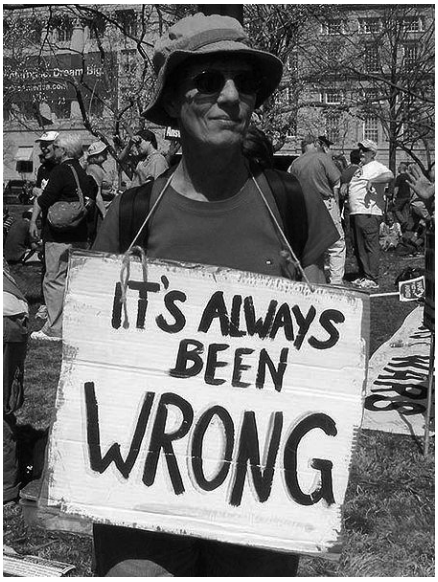

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They're Still Fighting, We're Still Marching

To the Editor:

I was in Washington, DC, on Saturday, March 20, marking the date of the US bombing of Baghdad and the start of the eighth year of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. There were thousands of us there, all ages, all shapes, all abilities. I took the bus from Pittsfield, as usual, meeting up near midnight with the usual crowd with signs and sorrows. In New Paltz we picked up about fourteen more riders, including young folks with bare feet and many drums. The drums slid around in the luggage compartment when the bus turned into the rest stop along the interstate.

We were not the only ones in town last weekend: Tea Party people, Immigration Reform people, runners raising money for a cause. I looked at the huge handsome buildings and sat on the grass. Cindy Sheehan sat near me and lay back with her hat over her face, sobbing. War, folks. One woman looked at my sign and shook her head. "It's not rocket science," she said.

— Bonner McAllester

Contributors

We thank the following folks for their recent contributions in response to our annual appeal. Times are hard, and your support encourages us and makes it possible for us to continue publishing our community paper.

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Remembering Orville Vosburgh

Orville E. Vosburgh, 89, a resident of South Egremont, died February 22 at Fairview Hospital.

Born in Sheffield, on March 14, 1920, son of Sanford and Mabel Hayes Vosburgh, he attended local schools, including the former Searles High School.

During WWII he proudly served his country in the Army with the 645th Tank Destroyer Battalion which was attached to the 45th Division and was among the first American troops to enter Dachau. While in the service he served in Africa, Naples, Foggia, Rome, Arno, southern France, Rhineland, and Central Europe. He was the recipient of two purple hearts, the good conduct medal, and the European Arican Middle Eastern Theater Campaign Ribbon with Bronze Service Arrowhead.

He worked as a machinist for Sheffield Plastics for 28 years, retiring in 1985. He was also a carpenter.

He leaves his wife, the former Wilma Curtis, whom he married on February 12, 1946, in the Methodist Church; three sons, Allan of Waipahu, Hawaii, Bruce and David, both of South Egremont; one half-brother, Earl Champigny of Monterey; two half-sisters, Leona Chamberlin and June Tryon, both of Monterey; five grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

Personal Notes

Amsteads Celebrate 50th Anniversary

Patricia and Donald Amstead Jr. celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on February 27 with a dinner at the Cork 'N Hearth given by their children. They were married on February 27, 1960, in North Canaan, CT. They have five children: Mark Amstead and his wife, Theresa, of Monterey; Keith Amstead of Great Barrington; Glen Amstead of Mill River; Scott Amstead of Monterey; and Jill Hughes and her husband, Timothy, of North Egremont; and seven grandchildren: Taylor, Cody, Molly, Mitchell, Matthew, and Cheyenne Amstead and Caitlin Hughes.

Mrs. Amstead, the former Patricia Oates, retired from the Town of Monterey after seventeen years of service. Don Amstead retired as Monterey Highway Superintendent in 2001.

Readers are encouraged to send Montereyan personal notes to the editor.

Remembering George Norian

George H. Norian, 78, died March 1, at Fairview Commons Nursing and Rehab Center. A memorial service for George will be held at Gould Farm at a date and time to be announced.

CET's Annual Earth Day Clothing & Textile Drive

On Saturday, April 24, and Sunday, April 25, the Center for Ecological Technology (CET) will hold its 15th annual Textile Drive to collect old clothing and household textiles for reuse and recycling. The event will be held in partnership with Goodwill Industries of the Berkshires to help celebrate the 40th anniversary of Earth Day.

Materials will be accepted at CET in Pittsfield on April 24 and 25. Clothing may also be dropped in the large metal bin at the back of the parking lot at the Berkshire South Regional Community Center, 15 Crissey Road in Great Barrington, from April 10 until April 25.

All types of clothing are accepted, including sweaters, shirts, skirts, pants, jackets, overcoats, and raincoats. Blankets, gloves, socks, paired shoes, and winter boots, sheets, towels, and curtains are also acceptable. Clothing must be clean, dry, and packed in strong plastic bags, such as garbage or lawn-leaf bags. Rugs, carpeting, and pillows will not be accepted. Please do not bring clothes on hangers.

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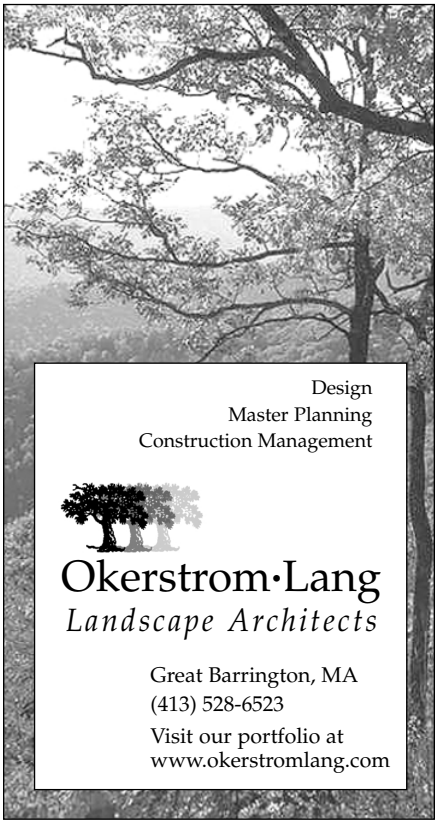


Calendar

Every Monday except holidays: Select Board meeting, 4 p.m., Town Hall.

Saturday, April 3: Volunteers needed to help break down ice rink, 9:30 a.m., Firehouse Pavilion.

Sunday, April 4:

Easter; Easter Egg Hunt, 2 p.m., Library lawn.

Transfer Station closed.

Monday, April 5: Transfer Station open 10 a.m.–6 p.m.

Thursdays, April 8, 15, 22: U.S. Census Testing 10 a.m.–1 p.m., Town Hall Meeting Room. Information 866-861-2010.

Thursday, April 8: Free Blood Pressure Clinic, Town Hall Meeting Room, 2–3 p.m.

Monday, April 12: Barbara Gauthier retirement gathering, Town Hall, 3 p.m.

Saturday, April 10: Organic Gardening Workshop with Ruth Green, 10 a.m.–noon, Monterey Meetinghouse. $30. See p. 19.

Monday, April 19: Patriots Day; Town Hall, Library closed.

Wednesday, April 21: Community Potluck Dinner, 6 p.m., Meetinghouse Fellowship Hall. Program will be on Monterey Community Garden. See p. 8.

Friday, April 23:

Informational meeting to discuss Town Meeting Warrant, 7 p.m., Firehouse.

Saturday, April 24:

Swamp walk led by Bonner McAllester, 10 a.m.–noon, Monterey Community Center (corner of Main and New Marlborough Roads). Free, see p. 9.

Informational Meeting on Broadband Initiative, 10 a.m., Firehouse.

Square and contra dancing, 8:30–11:30 p.m., Dewey Hall, Rt. 7, Sheffield. Music by Mountain Laurel. All dances are taught; beginners and children are welcome. Adults $8–10, children $5. Information 528-9385.

Sunday, April 25: *Food, Inc*., free movie, 7 p.m., Meetinghouse basement. See p. 11.

Monday, April 26: Adult Book Discussion Group, 7:30 p.m., Monterey Library.

Monterey News

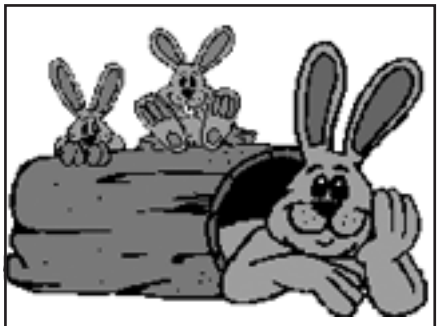
The *Monterey News* is an independent nonprofit corporation dedicated to fostering communication in the Monterey community. Our editorial address is P. O. Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245. We invite signed letters, articles, drawings, poetry, and photographs. Submissions may also be left in the drop box on the loading dock of the General Store. Address requests for advertising rates and further information to the Editor, or telephone us at 413-528-4347 or e-mail montereynews9@gmail.com.

The Observer
February 26–March 25

High temp. (3/20, 21)	66°
Low temp. (3/6)	16°
Avg. high temp.	46.1°
Avg. low temp.	28.9°
Avg. temp.	37.5°
Total precipitation (rain and melted snow)	6.41"
Snowfall	12.5"

Precipitation occurred on 15 days.

Total snowfall for winter to date of 97.8", 12" more than last winter.



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Contributions from local and guest artists this month:
Pat Arnow, p. 20; Rachel Arnow, p. 17; Maureen Banner, p. 19;
George Emmons, p. 16; Bonner McAllester, pp. 9, 14.

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